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## RECENT LITERATURE.

**Dr. Ph. J. J. Valentine on the Portuguese Discovery of Yucatan.**—In view of the coming Centennial, memoirs and treatises referring to the achievements of the immortal Genoese will be eagerly sought for, and be thankfully accepted by the learned public at large. We wish that all the publications belonging to this branch of history might be conceived in so interesting a way as is the memoir of Dr. Valentine, which was printed in the "Bulletin of the American Geographical Society of New York," containing 83 pages, with several maps. The title is "The Portuguese in the Track of Columbus," (1493). It was issued in four sections, running from December, 1888, to September, 1889. The author brings to light the hitherto unknown fact, that immediately after the return of Columbus from his first voyage, Joam II., King of Portugal, secretly dispatched a fleet of four vessels to the islands seen and occupied by the discoverer, enjoining the commander, Almeïda, to push on in the direction of Columbus' "boasted waterway" to India. Following up the given orders, the coast of Yucatan was struck, and a map of it was drawn, embodying pretty correctly all the peculiarities of this three-coasted peninsula. So well was this discovery kept secret by the Crown of Portugal, that the Spaniards, when striking the coast of Yucatan in 1518, really believed they had found a land never trod upon previously by any European individual.

The documentary evidence for the above statement is derived by the author from a correspondence between King Ferdinand and Columbus, and is of but recent publication. As to the cartographic evidence, it is drawn from a large Portuguese *Carta Mundi*, the entries of which do not reach farther than to the year 1501. This chart was discovered in the archives of the Duke of Modena, by Mr. Henry Harrisse, in the year 1884, and without the least doubt it is the same chart that served the editors of the atlases of 1508, 1513 and 1520 as a prototype for the first sketches ever made of the American Continent.

In Section I. the author shows that although intending to do so, Columbus never actually drew a chart that exhibited a summary of his discoveries. In Section II. the story of the expedition of the four Portuguese caravels is given, with additional extracts giving King Ferdinand's correspondence with Columbus on this particular subject. In Section III. the author gives a general survey of the great oceanic chart, the Portuguese *Imago Mundi*. Under the head of *Stellæ Maris*, he dis-

cusses in Section IV. the entry on the chart of three naval stations made by the Portuguese cartographer upon this chart,—a central one on the island of Saint Yago (Cape Verde Islands), a second near the Island of Brazil (Coast of Venezuela), and a third near the Island of Andros (Bahama Archipelago). In Section V. the reader is invited to direct his attention toward a very peculiar coast-line, drawn west of the Island of Cuba, and running from South to North, and given the correct reading of twenty-two names inscribed upon this coast, which names in the above-mentioned first sketches of America had been written in a way challenging sound interpretation, and which names now, on the original chart, come forth in full linguistic purity. Two of these names are those of two Portuguese dignitaries, and personal friends of King Joam II., with whom Columbus, a shipwrecked man, had conversed when arriving at Lisbon. Two other names are those of Cozumel and of Campeche, names known to appertain to ancient as well as to modern Yucatan. The circumstance that the three coasts of the peninsula were straightened out to one single line by the draughtsman of the chart is satisfactorily explained. In Section VII., "Identifications," the author shows that when comparing the characteristics proper to the physical features of the three coasts of Yucatan, they will be found to tally upon both the Portuguese and the modern chart, and that all of them present themselves in their natural order of succession.

Unfortunately, Dr. Valentine's article was not published all at once, but at long intervals.—A. S. GATCHET.

**Schroeter's Fungi of Silesia.**<sup>1</sup>—The third volume of Dr. Ferdinand Cohn's *Kryptogamen Flora von Schlesien* is to be devoted to the Fungi, which Dr. Schroeter is to elaborate. Of this work, begun in 1885, and issued in "Lieferungen" from time to time, Part I. is now complete. The author gives ninety pages of general description and introductory matter, in which (1) the history of fungology in Silesia, (2) the distribution of fungi in Silesia, (3) the general morphology and biology, and (4) the system of classification of the fungi, are discussed.

Bock appears to have been the first to catalogue the fungi of the region included in Schroeter's book: he enumerated twelve species in 1546. Cæsalpinus, in 1583, and Porta, in 1592, enumerated about twenty fungi, while Clusius, in 1601, brought the number up to one hundred and two species, representing some forty-seven genera. Little

<sup>1</sup> *Die Pilze Schlesiens*. Bearbeitet von Dr. J. Schroeter. Erste Hälfte, Breslau, 1889. J. U. Kern's Verlag (Max Müller). 814 pp., 8vo.